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ABSTRACT

This study examined the nature of and types of school involvement of parents of children with disabilities from rural school districts in Virginia. Parents (N=52) of elementary and middle school children from three different rural school districts completed a questionnaire containing a Likert type scale and open-ended questions. The data were analyzed using both qualitative and quantitative methods. Findings indicated that, although parents perceived their participation as high, their actual level of participation was not high. Results also revealed that parents lacked knowledge about their children's disabilities and that they experienced difficulties in managing their children at home. The responses to the open-ended questions identified several obstacles to parents' school involvement such as job schedules, transportation difficulties, and lack of child care. Questionnaire responses also suggested the presence of parental literacy problems. Parent training programs for improving parental involvement are recommended. Appendices include the questionnaire and tables analyzing responses to each question. (Contains 18 references.) (Author/DB)

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Running Head: IDENTIFYING FACTORS ASSOCIATED

Identifying Factors Associated with Parental Reluctance to Involvement in the Education of Children with Special Needs

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(This Study was Supported by Dean's Grant)

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Abstract

The purpose of this study was to examine the nature of and types of school involvement of parents of children with disabilities from rural school districts in Virginia. A second purpose was to identify factors that may hinder school participation of these parents. A corollary purpose was to explore methods to improve parent participation. The subjects of this study were 200 parents of elementary and middle school children with disabilities from three different rural school districts in Central Virginia. The data were collected using a self-developed questionnaire containing a Likert type scale and open-ended questions. The data were analyzed using both qualitative and quantitative methods. Although parents perceived their participation as high, the actual level of participation was not high. The results also revealed that these parents lacked knowledge about their children's disabilities and that they experienced difficulties in managing their children at home. The responses to open-ended questions identified several obstacles to their school involvement. Parent training programs for improving parental involvement are recommended. The low rate of survey return may limit the generalization of the findings.

Identifying Factors Associated with Parental Reluctance Toward Involvement in the Education of their Children

Traditionally, parent involvement in the education of their children has included participation in activities such as attendance at parent teacher conferences, voluntary participation in Brownies, or fund raising activities. However, a significant number of teachers today have higher expectations of parents than they did a decade ago. (Metropolitan Life survey, 1998). The teachers believe that parents can and should do more to support their children's education both at school and at home. A metropolitan Life survey of American teachers (1998) showed a consistent relationship between students' ability to succeed academically and the extent to which parents provide support and take an interest in their academic and personal aspirations. Christensen and Cleary (1990) reported that children attaining higher test scores possessed a more positive attitude toward school and had a higher completion rate of home work. Dowd, Hess, and Nickles (1996) reported teachers from urban schools believe their schools are doing good to excellent jobs in getting parental involvement in both educational and non-educational areas. Nevertheless, many urban school teachers still believe that parents fail to motivate their children and/or that they take too little interest in their children's education (Met Life, 1998).

Meheran and White (1988) reported that there was a considerable improvement in the academic performance of children with learning disabilities when their parents regularly tutored them at home. The first law in education, mandating the parental involvement in their children's education was PL. 94-142. This law also mandated that

local educational agencies provide for the participation and consultation of the parents or guardians of the children. Katsiyannis and Ward (1992) reported that 20% of the parents did not participate in their Individualized Educational Program meetings. Their study also revealed that many parents were unaware of their rights. Katsiyannis and Ward (1998) emphasized the need for making parents aware of their parental rights and encouraging their participation. Although the State of Virginia has been partially successful in providing opportunities for parents to be involved in the educational planning of their children with disabilities, the parents have admitted not attending or participating fully (Katsiyannis & Ward, 1992).

Parents are forceful agents of change in their children's lives. Clark (1983) reported finding a significant academic improvement in children when their parents actively participated in their formal education. Taylor (1988) pointed out that when teachers work with children who are intellectually or physically different from their peers, knowledge about the family is an important component. Duns and Trivette (1989) reported that in most effective interactions the teachers emphasized the role and responsibilities of the families for solving their children's problems and meeting their needs. They also assumed that the families with whom they worked had the ability to understand and manage their lives.

Although many parents recognize the importance for involvement, they do not actively participate in the education of their children (Shea & Bauer, 1991). MacMillan and Turnbull (1983) reported some of the inhibiting factors as one parent family situation and the extent of the severity of their children's disability. As parents and

teachers plan together and implement plans of action, they find that working as a team is more effective than working alone (Shea & Bauer, 1985). Leitch and Tangrin (1988) reported that parents of children with special needs face many economic and personal hardships. Work schedules, transportation, and child care problems make it difficult to attend meetings and or volunteer in other activities. Parents also seem to avoid school interactions with teachers due to the fear of being blamed for their children's problems or being considered ignorant. Stereotypical attitudes, expectations, parental negative school experiences, and differences in values also hinder parental involvement.

Poor parental involvement can be due to many other factors as well. Several parents were previously enrolled in special education programs themselves. The limited abilities of some of these parents could have discouraged their involvement in their children's education. The restructuring and changes in methods of teaching and curriculum in the present day educational system are also too overwhelming for some parents (Diamond, 1994). The instructional methods are not just the traditional worksheets that most parents are familiar with. School assignments are more complex and technologically oriented. Therefore some parents may find it difficult to assist these children with project requirements even if they wished to do so.

School districts are required to meet a certain minimum standard for both parental and teacher involvement in educational activities. Several researchers have suggested various methods for improving parent school relationship. Parents and teachers working side by side as a team with the child's success as the common goal can improve parental participation. Salisburg and Evans (1988) reported that parental satisfaction with their

involvement is dependent on demonstrated benefits of their involvement. This in turn helps to improve their motivation for increased involvement in their children's school activities. Idol (1993) suggested giving parents a systematic feedback and developing complementary home instruction. Some of the measures that can increase parental involvement are:-

- Sending home notes and daily report cards to keep parents informed of pupil progress.
- Regular meetings with parents to discuss progress.
- Avoiding words and phrases that may give parents false or undesirable impressions of their children or their exceptionality.
- Avoiding professional jargons in communications.

Sileo, Sileo, and Prater (1996) recommended education programs for training parents with limited formal education. The programs they suggested include teaching math, language, reasoning skills, functional skills, and methods for improving positive interactions with school professionals. Harry (1992) in Sileo, Sileo and Prater (1996) suggested emphasizing the need for preparing parents from low-income and under represented groups to renegotiate traditional authoritative approach for their children. They also suggested that parents from diversified cultural backgrounds practice intuitive and nonverbal approach when dealing with school personnel. This pattern is also seen in parents of children with disabilities representing a lower socioeconomic background. Often times this is misinterpreted as ignorance or lack of interest on the part of the parents. Shea and Bauer (1991) recommended role playing

and simulation to increase parent confidence for interacting with school personnel more assertively. Henderson (1987) reported higher student academic achievement rates when parents were tutored on how to assist their children with academic assignments. Minner (1989) found that students with disabilities were able to improve their math ability when parents were assisted through collaborative consultation. Several schools have developed parent information booklets for increasing parental participation. Elksinin and Elksinin (1991) discussed short-term workshops for training parents. Several education agencies such as the New York State Department of Education, The Texas Education Agency, and The Oklahoma State Department of Education have developed guided booklets for facilitating parent participation (Katsiyannis, 1992).

Shea and Bauer (1991) reported that teachers faced considerable obstacles when dealing with parents. These are demonstrated in the form of anger, self-centeredness, passive-resistance and denial. They suggested several techniques in overcoming these barriers. For example, in order to deal with passive-resistant parents, it is best to involve them in all planning by using their recommendations whenever possible. When conferencing with self-centered parents, professionals can emphasize their children's individuality by highlighting strengths and weaknesses.

A 1998 Met Life survey of teachers regarding parent responsiveness showed that teachers working in the poorest communities rated the parents availability more negatively than those working in more affluent communities. More teachers working in communities with lower median incomes than those working with parents from higher income strata believe that parents take too little interest in their children's education (Met

Life, 1998). Thirty five percent of today's teachers feel that parent involvement should take place both in school and in home as opposed to 24% in 1987. Today's teachers are more appreciative of parents participating in school activities in support of school and teachers than they were ten years ago.

Although an increasing number of schools and school personnel attempt to accommodate and encourage parental participation, teachers feel the level of parental participation is not enough. The Metropolitan study showed that teachers would like to see an increase in the level of parental involvement in their children's education. Although numerous researches are conducted regarding the reasons of poor parental involvement and the methods of improving involvement, very few studies have attempted to investigate the perceptions of the involvement of parents of children with disabilities from the lower socio-economic group. Thus, the purpose of this study was to investigate parents of children with disabilities in the following areas:-

1. How do parents define participation in school?
2. How are the parents involved at the present time?
3. Would parents like to have a greater role in the education of their children?
4. Do parents have suggestions for greater participation by them?
5. Are there factors hindering parents from getting involved?
6. What are parents' views on parent training programs organized by the school?

Method

Participants

A survey research method was used to collect data for this study. A convenience sampling method was used to select rural, public school divisions where students with disabilities attended. The subjects were also selected by using a convenience sampling method. The total number of subjects included 200 parents of children with various types of mild to moderate disabilities in elementary and middle schools from three different rural school districts in Central Virginia.

Instrument

A self-developed questionnaire with 3 parts was used to collect data for this study (See Appendix A). The first part contained demographic variables such as the identification of the respondent, level of education of the respondent, and income level. The second part was a Likert type scale with 28 questions. These questions covered items like parents' perceptions of their current involvement in their children's education (Item numbers 1, 3, 5, 9, 12, 23, & 25), parental contact with other parents (Item numbers 18 & 19), parental desire for training (Item numbers 16, 17 & 27), their willingness to get involved (Item numbers 4, 10, 20, 22, & 28), self-perception of their ability to assist their children (Item numbers 11 & 26), their attitude toward school/ teachers (Item numbers 6, 7 & 8), their attitude toward their children's disability/ ability (Item numbers 2, 13, 14, 15, 21 & 24). The subjects were requested to rate each item using a five point scale (1- no opinion, 2 - strongly disagree, 3 - disagree , 4 - agree, and 5 - agree strongly). The third part of the questionnaire contained five open-ended questions

covering parental non-involvement, parental definition of parent participation, how they are currently participating, as well as suggestions for increasing their level of participation. In addition they were also asked to suggest topics to be included in parent training programs. A pilot study was conducted to ensure the clarity and validity of the questionnaire. This pilot study was conducted among 10 parents of students with disabilities in an elementary school.

Procedure

A cover letter with a copy of the questionnaire was sent to the superintendent of each school district concerned for the approval of the study. The letter explained the purpose of the study, emphasized that all data collected will be strictly confidential and that the names of schools and subjects will be accorded strict anonymity. After permission was obtained a packet containing a cover letter was sent to the principals and the special education directors. The packets also contained a cover letter for the teachers of the Subjects' children, and a sealed envelope with a cover letter and questionnaire for the Subjects. The teachers were requested to distribute the envelope containing the survey to the Subjects through their respective children . The Subjects' package also contained a cover letter explaining the purpose of the study together with the survey. The Subjects were asked to complete and return the survey within two weeks directly to the researcher in the self-addressed stamped envelope supplied. The researcher was unable to carry out a follow-up study of the subjects due to a lack of cooperation from the schools.

Results

Of the 200 surveys sent out 52 (26 %) were returned. Sixty-five percent of the respondents were mothers and the rest were fathers or grand parents. Fifty-six percent of the respondents were married and the rest were single mothers. This consisted of divorced , separated and unmarried mothers. About 10% of the respondents had a Bachelors degree while 18% had a two year college education. Sixty-five percent, the largest group, were High school graduates. The percentage of respondents with only middle and elementary school educational levels were six percent and two percent respectively (See Table 1).

Fifty-six percent of the Subjects annual income was below $25,000. Only 7 % earned an income in the range of $35,000 -$ 45,000. The distribution of disability type showed that 67% of the respondents had a child with a learning disability, 9% with mental retardation, 8% with emotional disturbance/behavioral disorders and 12% with LD and ADD or Ed/BD and ADD. The length of the children's special education placement ranged from 1 - 6 years (See Table 1).

Self-Perception of Participation

The respondents rated themselves very highly (94%) in the answer to the question on their general involvement in the education of their children. Likewise in their responses to the items of helping their children with homework and in their participation in IEP meetings drew very high positive responses (90 % and 81% respectively). However, the positive responses to their assistance in the children's classrooms and contact with the teachers were less than 70% (See Table 2).

Items regarding contact with parents of other children with disabilities showed that 37% of the parents did not have any contact while 31% did not even have any opinion regarding this item. A comparable percentage (35%) did not know that there was a parent group in the school their children attended.

Parental Desire for Training

When asked if it was necessary for the school to offer parent training programs, 77% of the respondents said yes. Eight-one percent expressed willingness to participate in a parent training program if such a program was offered. A very high percentage (90%) of the parents expressed a desire to learn more about disabilities (See Table 3).

Parental Willingness to Get Involved

A very high percentage of the parents said that they would assist in their children's classrooms if they are requested to do so by the teachers (89%). A slightly lower percentage (79%) responded that they would help the children with homework, if the teachers give guidance. Eight-seven percent of the respondents indicated that they would get involved in a parent group if the schools offer it. A very high percentage (85%) of the respondents felt that the teachers should phone them on a regular basis to inform them of their children's performance at the school. Eight-one percent of the respondents indicated their willingness to increase their level of participation if they can learn more about disabilities (See Table 4).

Parental Attitude Toward School/Teachers

A majority of the parents (81%) indicated that they felt free and comfortable to contact their children's teachers. Seventy-five percent also felt that the teachers are

concerned about their children and that the teachers took time to explain homework assignments (See Table 5).

Parents Perception of Their Ability to Assist Their Children

When asked if they were competent enough to assist their children with homework, the parents answered that they were competent enough to assume that responsibility . Ninety-two percent of the parents felt that they were able to understand their children's strengths and weaknesses (See Table 6).

Parental Attitude Toward their Children's Ability

Another area in which data were collected was the attitude of the parents toward their children's disability and their perception regarding the usefulness of the education for disabled children (See Table 7). Seventy-nine percent of the parents had a positive attitude toward their children's abilities/disabilities. However, 21% percent did not want to assist their children with school related activities because the children had a disability. Ninety-two percent of the parents indicated they were proud of their children's accomplishments. A contrasting perception was seen toward the necessity for children with disabilities participating in extracurricular activities.

Parents Suggestions

Open-ended questions revealed insights of possible obstacles for not participating, ways of increasing participation, and suggestions for parent training program topics. The responses were analyzed by calculating frequencies of each suggestion and their percentages. Ninety-five percent of the respondents answered the question regarding definition of parental involvement. All respondents defined it as " taking interest in the

child's everyday life at home and school".

There was a 50 % response to the question of participation. Fifty percent of the respondents indicated that they attended parent teacher conferences, and contacted teachers whenever it was necessary. About 25% said that they helped their children with home work and visited the teachers personally. About 10% mentioned going into the classroom and assisting children. One parent responded conferencing with counselors in addition to conferencing with teachers.

70% of the survey respondents offered suggestions for increasing parental participation. Thirty five percent suggested that they would be willing to help if the teachers requested their assistance. It was suggested by 10% of the respondents that meetings should be scheduled according to their convenience.. Other suggestions included providing transportation and baby sitting facilities. Recognition of parental input by way of feedback on the benefits of their participation was also suggested. It was also suggested that parents be given advice and guidance in seeking relevant information on their children's problems from different sources. A few parents also indicated that schools should arrange some social activities for the parents.

The reasons given for non-participation included interference with job schedule, transportation difficulties, single family home situation, lack of facilities/baby sitters for proper child care during parents' absence, and inconvenient meeting times. A small percentage also indicated "teachers do not pay any attention to them or do not respect their opinions". Suggestions for topics for parent training produced valuable insight. It revealed that the majority of the parents are eager to learn about disabilities in general

and knowing about managing children's behavior and their own behavior. Two parents explained in detail how they get angry and inpatient with their children when disputes arise between them, and expressed a desire to learn how to deal with these problems. Some parents also expressed a desire to learn how to teach a child with disability.

The written comments of the respondents revealed a serious yet often forgotten fact that some parents may have a literacy problem. Although 65 % were high school graduates, their written comments revealed that some of them have severe problems with their written language and even with reading comprehension. Serious grammatical and spelling errors in the written part of the open-ended questions point to a necessity for research in parental literacy rate in rural school districts.

Discussion and Implications

This study attempted to investigate parental perceptions about their involvement in the education of their children with disabilities. A corollary purpose was to explore methods to improve parental participation. The parents perceived that they were highly involved in their children's education. Nevertheless, upon close examination of the answers to the relevant items, it was found that the participation level was actually low. A large number of the parents also believed it was necessary for them to learn more about their children's disabilities and how to go about helping them with their academic studies. The results of this study confirmed the results of some previous studies (Leyser,1985) that parents do not participate in parental groups aimed at sharing information and experience. A possible explanation for this may be that they were not informed of the existence of such groups at their children's schools. Another reason may

be that such groups simply do not exist, or that the parents do not feel comfortable going to their children's schools. Parental suggestion that schools inform them or invite them may be an indication that parents in rural areas feel embarrassed to volunteer either because they are modest or because they are just shy.

An unexpected finding was that parental participation rate is higher now than as reported in some earlier studies. One reason for this could be that only those parents actively involved in their children's educational activities responded. Nevertheless, the very high non- return rate suggests or confirms previous reports of the lack of parental participation. Although several steps are taken by schools to promote parental involvement, and parental satisfaction with schools is encouraging , this research showed parents still have some similar concerns which were reported ten years ago. Thus these schools need to take steps to help parents overcome some inhibiting factors limiting participation. The suggestions by parents to encourage them to get involved deserves school attention. A few parents also indicated they needed to hear from the teachers that their participation in fact is beneficial to the school and the children. As Leyser's study (1985) reported, despite the respondents satisfaction with schools and teachers, a very high percentage is still eager to acquire knowledge in disabilities, and knowledge on ways to discipline their children at home.

Limitations of the Study

The low percentage of surveys returned may have an effect on the generalization of the results. In addition, the school divisions and subjects of this study were selected using a convenience sampling method which may limit the generalization of the results of this

study.

Recommendations

The following are some recommendations for increased parental involvement in the light of the findings of this study:-

1. Delegate meaningful responsibilities to parents.

2. Send notes of appreciation recognizing parents' participation by specifically pointing out how their participation benefited the school.

3. Give serious consideration in conducting parent training programs. The topics covered should include overall information about disabilities, and techniques in dealing with behavioral problems of the children and parents.

4. The provide baby sitting services when parents attend conferences, and other related activities at the school.

5. Taking into consideration parental convenience when scheduling meetings

6. Provide transportation for parents without cars.

7. Adult education with emphasis on literacy training should be seriously considered.

8. A study involving teachers from the same schools where this study was conducted may give valuable insights.

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Appendixes

Appendix A

Parent Participation Survey

Parent Participation Survey

Part A

Directions: Please ***Tick*** the **responses which describes** you best. All your responses will be kept in strict confidence.

1. Person completing the survey:-

a. Father---------- b. Mother---------- c. Other----------

2. Marital status of the parent:-

a. Married---------- b. Single---------- c. Widowed----------

d. Other (specify)----------

3. Number of children in the family receiving special education:-

a. One---------- b. Two---------- c. Other (specify)----------

4. Your highest level of education:-

a. Elementary---------- b. Middle---------- c. High School----------

d. College (specify your degree or certification)---------- e. Other----------

5. Have you ever received special education?

a. Yes---------- b. No----------

6. If your answer to question #5 is 'Yes', please specify the type of your disability and nature of services received.----------

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7. Are you employed?

a. Yes---------- b. No----------

8. If your answer to #7 is 'Yes', please specify the type of your job or job title.----------

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9. Your annual income. (Please choose one):-

a. $10,000-$15,000 --------- b. $15,000-$20,000--------- c. $20,000-$25,000---------

d. $25,000-$30,000--------- e. $30,000-$35,000--------- f. $35,000-$40,000----------

g. $40,000-$45,000-------- h. $45,000-$50,000-------- I. Other (specify the range)---------

10. Does your child receive Special Education services?

a. Yes---------- b. No----------

11. Age of your child receiving special education----------

12. Grade of your child receiving special education----------

13. Length of your child's special education placement:-

a. One year---------- b. Two years---------- c. Three years--------- d. Four years---------

e. Other (specify)----------

14. Type of your child's disability:

a. Learning disability---------- b. Mental retardation----------

c. Emotional/behavioral disorder---------- d. Other (specify)----------

15. Degree of disability of your child:-

a. Mild---------- b. Moderate---------- c. Severe---------- d. Other----------

Part B

The following questions are related to your feelings about the special education services and your child's school work. The information you provide will help the school to offer improved services to students with special education needs. Please do not write your name on any of these questionnaires. Your answers are completely anonymous.

Directions: Please ***Circle the number*** that describes your feelings best for each statement.

5. Strongly Agree (SA)
4. Agree (A)
3. Disagree (D)
2. Strongly Disagree (SD)
1. No Opinion (N)

	SA	A	D	SD	N
1. I feel I am involved in the education of my child.	5	4	3	2	1
2. I am proud of my child's accomplishments.	5	4	3	2	1
3. I assist in my child's classroom.	5	4	3	2	1
4. I will assist in my child's classroom if my child's teacher requests.	5	4	3	2	1
5. I contact my child's teacher at least two times a month to find out my child's progress.	5	4	3	2	1
6. I feel comfortable contacting my child's teacher.	5	4	3	2	1
7. My child brings home school work.	5	4	3	2	1

	SA	A	D	SD	N
8. My child's teacher takes time to explain my child's school work so that I can help him/her with the homework.	5	4	3	2	1
9. I assist my child with his/her homework.	5	4	3	2	1
10. I will assist my child with the homework if the teacher explains it to mé.	5	4	3	2	1
11. I cannot assist my child with the homework as I do not know how to help.	5	4	3	2	1
12. I visit my child's classroom to learn more about school and his/her scho.	5	4	3	2	1
13. I think helping my child with school work is teacher's work, not mine.	5	4	3	2	1
14.I do not assist my child as he/she has a disability.	5	4	3	2	1
15.My child will not improve because of his disability	5	4	3	2	1
16.I think the school should offer parent training to assist children.	5	4	3	2	1
17.I will participate in a parent training program if it is offered.	5	4	3	2	1
18.I am involved in parent groups at the school.	5	4	3	2	1

	SA	A	D	SD	N
19.I do not know if there is a parent group at my child's school.	5	4	3	2	1
20.I will get involved if there is a parent group in my child's school.	5	4	3	2	1
21.I believe I should help my child with his/her school work so that it will help his/her progress.	5	4	3	2	1
22.I would like my child's teacher to call me on a regular basis.	5	4	3	2	1
23.I participate in my child's extra curricular activities	5	4	3	2	1
24.Children with disabilities do not need any extra curricular activities.	5	4	3	2	1
25.I attend IEP meetings whenever I am called.	5	4	3	2	1
26. I know my child's type of disabilities, strengths, and weaknesses.	5	4	3	2	1
27.I like to learn more about disabilities.	5	4	3	2	1
28.I will participate more if I can learn more about my child's disabilities.	5	4	3	2	1

Part C

Please complete the following:

1. Parent participation means----------

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2. The way I participate in my child's school is----------

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3. I will participate more if the school----------

---

4. I do not participate in my child's school work because----------

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5. I suggest the following to the school----------

---

6. The frequency of my contact with the teacher is----------

Appendix B

Tables

Table 1

Profile of the Respondents

Table 1

Profile of the Respondents

Variable	Percentage
Respondent	
Father	23.1
Mother	65.4
Other	11.5
Marital status	
Married	55.8
Single	36.5
Widowed	1.9
Other	3.8
No response	1.9
Educational level	
Elementary	1.9
Middle	5.8
High-school	65.4
Other	26.9

table continues

Employed	
Yes	63.5
No	36.5
Annual income	
10,.000-15,000	30.8
15,000-20,000	5.8
20,000-25,000	19.2
25,000-30,000	7.7
30,000-35,000	5.8
35,000-40,000	5.8
40,0000-45,000	1.9
45,0000-55,000	0.0
Other	7.7
No response	15.4
Student's disability	
Learning disability	67.3
Mental retardation	9. 6
Emotional/behavioral disorder	7.7
Other	11.5
No response	3.8

table continues

Length of special education placement	
1-2 years	38.5
3-4 years	28.8
5-6 years	28.8
Other	3.8
Degree of disability	
Mild	44.2
Moderate	6.5
Severe	9.6
Other	5.7
No response	3.8

Table 2

Self-Perception of Parents

Table 2

Self-Perception of Participation

Items	Percentage
1. I feel I am involved in the education of my child.	
Agree- Strongly agree	94.3
Disagree-Strongly disagree	3.8
No opinion	1.9
2. I assist in my child's classroom.	
Agree- Strongly agree	50.0
Disagree-Strongly disagree	30.8
No opinion	13.5
No response	5.8
3. I contact my child's teacher at least twice a month	
Agree-Strongly agree	67.3
Disagree-Strongly disagree	25.0
No opinion	5.8
No response	2.9

table continues

4. I assist my child with his/her homework	
Agree- Strongly agree	90.4
Disagree-Strongly disagree	5.7
No opinion	3.8
5. I visit my child's classroom	
Agree- Strongly agree	71.2
Disagree-Strongly disagree	17.3
No opinion	11.5
6. I am involved in parents groups at the school.	
Agree- Strongly agree	30.7
Disagree-Strongly disagree	36.5
No opinion	30.8
7. I do not know if there is a parent group at my child's school	
Agree- Strongly agree	3.8
Disagree-Strongly disagree	32.7
No opinion	34.6
8. I participate in my child's extra-curricular activities	
Agree- Strongly agree	65.4
Disagree-Strongly disagree	33.1
No opinion	1.5

table continues

9. I attend IEP meetings whenever I am called

Agree- Strongly agree	80.8
Disagree-Strongly disagree	3.4
No opinion	5.8

Table 3

Parental Desire for Training

Table 3

Parental Desire for Training

Item	Percentage
1. I think the school should offer parent training.	
Agree- Strongly agree	76.9
Disagree-Strongly disagree	5.7
No opinion	17.3
2. I will participate in a parent training program if it is offered.	
Agree- Strongly agree	80.8
Disagree-Strongly disagree	9.6
No opinion	9.6
3. I want to learn more about disabilities.	
Agree- Strongly agree	90.3
Disagree-Strongly disagree	3.8
No opinion	5.8

Table 4
Parental Willingness to Get Involved

Table 4

Parental Willingness to get Involved

Items	Percentage
1. I will assist in my child's classroom if my child's teacher requests.	
Agree- Strongly agree	88.5
Disagree-Strongly disagree	5.8
No opinion	5.8
2. I will assist my child with homework if the teacher explains it to me.	
Agree- Strongly agree	78.8
Disagree-Strongly disagree	11.5
No opinion	9.6
3. I will get involved in a parent group if there is one.	
Agree- Strongly agree	86.9
Disagree-Strongly disagree	13.4
No opinion	9.6
4. I would like my child's teachers to phone me on a regular basis.	
Agree- Strongly agree	84.7
Disagree-Strongly disagree	15.4
5. I will participate more if I can learn more about disabilities	
Agree- Strongly agree	80.7

table continues

	Identifying Factors	42
Disagree-strongly disagree	7.7	
No opinion	11.5	

Table 5
Parental Attitude Toward School/Teachers

Table 5

Parental Attitude Toward School/Teachers

Items	Percentage
1. I feel comfortable contacting my child's teachers	
Agree- Strongly agree	80.7
Disagree-Strongly disagree	15.4
No opinion	3.8
2. My child brings home homework.	
Agree- Strongly agree	82.6
Disagree-Strongly disagree	15.4
No response	1.9
3. Teacher takes time to explain.	
Agree- Strongly agree	75.0
Disagree-Strongly disagree	21.1
No opinion	1.9
No response	1.9

Table 6
Parental Perception of their Ability to Assist Their Children

Table 6

Parental Perception of their Ability to Assist their Children

Items	Percentage
1. I cannot assist my child with the homework as I do not have the ability.	
Agree - Strongly agree	13.4
Disagree - Strongly disagree	67.4
No opinion	17.3
No response	1.9
2. I know my child's kind of disabilities, strengths, and weaknesses.	
Agree - Strongly agree	92.3
Disagree - Strongly disagree	5.8
No opinion	1.9

Table 7
Parental Attitude Toward Their Children's Ability

Table 7

Parental Attitude Toward Their Children's Ability

Items	Percentage
1. I am proud of my child's accomplishments.	
Agree- Strongly agree	92.3
Disagree-Strongly disagree	5.8
No opinion	1.9
2. I think helping my child with school work is the teacher's responsibility, not mine.	
Agree- Strongly agree	84.7
Disagree-Strongly disagree	8.7
No opinion	7.7
3. I do not assist my child because of his/her disability	
Agree- Strongly agree	9.6
Disagree-Strongly disagree	79.3
No opinion	11.1
4. My child will not improve because of his disability.	
Agree- Strongly agree	7.6
Disagree-Strongly disagree	73. 1

table continues

No opinion	13.5
No response	5.8

4. I believe I should help my child with homework, so that he/she will improve.

Agree- Strongly agree	96.2
Disagree-Strongly disagree	3.8

5. Children with disabilities do not need any extra-curricular activities.

Agree- Strongly agree	9. 6
Disagree-Strongly disagree	78. 8
No opinion	11 .5

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